

Giant cable companies should not be permitted to grow larger. Further consolidation in the cable industry is a clear violation of horizontal ownership rules that must be re-established to serve the public interest.

The concentration of power and control over distribution of media is a growing problem in this country. Though we have more channels available than ever before, they are under the operation of a handful of giant corporations.

If Comcast and Time Warner are allowed to merge with Adelphia, the two companies will control nearly 50 percent of the national market. This level of concentration in the cable industry will lead to higher consumer rates and

lower quality
service.

— Green Party
candidates deserve
equal time, but they
are being pushed out
by the
monopolization of
cable media by the
republicans and
democrats. More
local and
independent
'grassroot'
programming is
needed to give a
realistic picture of
the millions of
Americans that
support Green Party
candidates.

Since passage of the
Telecommunications
Act of 1996 and the
“deregulation” of
cable, consumers
have seen their
rates jump an
average of 59
percent — with some
areas experiencing
even more dramatic
increases.

We are required to
buy channels we
don't want or need

because the cable operators bundle them together. The quality of customer service often reflects the fact that cable television is not a competitive market.

Meanwhile, the cost of cable modem service remains out of reach for many households, holding constant for years and selectively underserving rural and low-income Americans. The American people are watching the digital divide widen even as the need for access to high-speed networks increases.

— Comcast Cable took away my favorite channel, the sci-fi channel, by putting it into a more expensive package that I could not pay for. The package that i can pay for shows nothing but endless reruns of old programs and

movies and of course, as many bad commercials as they can squeeze into an hour.

— In 1995, I was led to believe by a fast-talking cable slaeman, that the new computerized digital technology they were adapting would soon allow for customers to actually 'make their own' package deals, so that they could order only the channels they wanted. That was 10 years ago. It has not happened that way yet. Either the cable guy was lying, or he was talking about the far future, a time when I may not even be alive.

— Btw, I just cancelled my Comcast cable services because it was a pitiful waste of \$20 a month.

Cable companies have

become less responsive to the needs and requirements of communities. The quality of public accountability in local franchise agreements has declined, as big companies leverage their power to squeeze local governments.

In many communities, the truly independent sources of local news, information and culture come from the public channels produced at the local access centers.

Unfortunately, local channels lack the resources to produce the programming that citizens want and need.

The last thing we need is to reward the anti-competitive actions of cable giants by permitting greater consolidation in

ownership, reducing competition, and encouraging more of the same.

— Agreed. Local and independent programming should not be pushed out by the conglomerates. Big media should not be a bully in our backyards.